IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE, ANDHRA PRADESH
AT HYDERABAD

(Special Original Jurisdiction)

WEDNESDAY, THE NINTH DAY OF MARCH
TWO THOUSAND AND FIVE

PRESENT

THE HON'BLE MR JUSTICE N.V. RAMANA

WRIT PETITION NO : 9980 of 1998

Between:

1..M/s Surya Mahal, Rep by its Managing Partner, B.V. Satyanarayana,
S/o Lae Anjaneyulu, Srikakulam.
2.. M/s Sridevi Picture Palace, Rep by its Proprietrix, Smt B.Ramabhai,

W/o,B.Ananda Rao,
Narasannapeta, Srikakulam Dist.
3..M/s Ramalaxmana Theatre, Rep by its Partner, A.Suryanarayana,

S/o,Late Gunnaiah, Srikakulam Dist.

..... PETITIONERS

AND

1 The Government of A.P., Rep by its Principal Secretary
Home Department, Secretariat,
Hyderabad.
2 The Joint Collector,
Srikakulam, Srikakulam District.

....RESPONDENTS

Petition under Article 226 of the constitution of India praying that in the circumstances stated in the Affidavit filed herein the High Court will be pleased to issue a Writ, order or direction more especially one in the nature of Writ of Mandamus declaring the proceedings of the 1st Respondent in Memo.No.1730/Genl-A1/94-3, dt:23.5.1995, as illegal, arbitrary and Ultravires of the Powers vested in it and also declare the in action of the 1st Respondent in disposing of the Application filed by the petitioners on 8.1.98 as Abuse of the power illegal and arbitrary and consequently direct the respondents to permit the petitioners to run Theatres as per its application dt:8.1.98

Counsel for the Petitioner:MR.P.SRI RAGHU RAM

Counsel for the Respondent No.: GP FOR HOME

The Court made the following :

ORDER:

Questioning the action of the 1st respondent in issuing the impugned Memo No.1730/Genl.A4/94-3, dated 23.05.1995 in extending the time for reduction of seating capacity in theatres, the present writ petition is filed.

Learned counsel for petitioner submits that the subject matter of this writ petition is squarely covered by the judgment of this Court in **Nataraj Theatre v. Govt. of Andhra Pradesh**[1] (Writ Petition Nos.21691 of 1995 and 30691 of 1998, dated 26.08.1999), wherein this Court considered similar issue and disposed of the same with the following directions:

1. The impugned Memo No.1730/Genl.A1/94-3 dated 23-5-1995 is declared as *ultra vires*, without power or jurisdiction and the same is set aside.

2. Consequential orders passed by the Licensing Authority, if any, are vitiated as the Licensing Authority abdicated its statutory functions and acted as per the dictates of the Government, and they accordingly are set aside.

3. If the petitioner has already been accorded permission for reducing seating capacity either by the Government or by the Licensing Authority, the same shall not be rescinded. However, if the order is passed by the Government pursuant to the interim orders of this Court, a formal order by the Licensing Authority is a must to save the order of the Government from the vice of being void order.

4. The petitioner is permitted to make application to the Licensing Authority seeking reduction of seating capacity, if not already made before or during the pendency of the writ petition. Such application shall be considered in accordance with law and keeping in view the observations in this judgment. For the purpose of direction No.3 above the application made by the petitioner, if any, shall be considered.

5. If any licensee has reduced seating capacity in anticipation of sanction by the Licensing Authority, the Licensing Authority may inspect the theatre and give further directions as may be appropriate to avoid

abuse or misuse of reduced seating capacity. This direction is in accordance with the judgment of the Division Bench of this Court in WP No.9640 of 1984 dated 30-10-1984.

6. The licensee shall not be entitled to enhance the rates of admission which has been already sanctioned by the Government vide G.O. Ms. No.218 dated 14-7-1995 and any further enhancement by the licensee will be in accordance with further sanction by the competent authority.

7. It is further directed that the Licensing Authority has to consider any application filed at any time seeking reduction of seating capacity subject to the provisions of Rule 10A without any restriction as to cut off date. And

8. There shall be no order as to costs.

In the circumstances, this writ petition is also disposed of in terms of the judgment of this Court in W.P.Nos.21691 of 1995 and
30691 of 1998, dated 26.08.1999. No costs.

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N.V. RAMANA, J.

9-3-2005

tvk

..... REGISTRAR

// TRUE COPY //

SECTION OFFICER

To

1 The Principal Secretary,Government of A.P.,
Home Department, Secretariat,
Hyderabad.
2 The Joint Collector,
Srikakulam, Srikakulam District.

3) 2 CD copies

4).. 2CCs to The Government Pleader for Home, High Court of A.P. Buildings, Hyderabad (OUT)

*Form-NIC-OGS/WP{**KCS**}*